

Case 2957

Phytobius Dejean, 1835 (Insecta, Coleoptera): proposed conservation

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Abstract. The purpose of this application is to conserve the weevil generic name *Phytobius* Dejean, 1835, in its current usage as placed on the Official List of Generic Names in Opinion 1529 (1989). It is threatened by the homonym *Phytobius* Schönherr, 1833 which was established with a different type species.

Keywords. Nomenclature; taxonomy; Coleoptera; CURCULIONIDAE; weevils; *Phytobius*; *Phytobius quadrituberculatus*.

1. In an application to the Commission published in 1980 (Silfverberg, 1980, p. 254), I proposed, amongst other actions, that the following entry be placed on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology: '*Phytobius* Dejean, 1835 (gender: masculine), type species by subsequent designation by Thomson, 1859, *Curculio quadrituberculatus* Fabricius, 1787'. This was done in Opinion 1529 (March 1989, p. 71).

2. At the time of my application I was unaware that Schönherr had established the name *Phytobius* in 1833 (p. 20), two years earlier than Dejean's 1835 work. This was pointed out by O'Brien & Wibmer (1984, p. 296), who considered that Schönherr had introduced *Phytobius* as a replacement name for his genus *Hydaticus*, which was preoccupied. The background is that Schönherr (1825, p. 583) introduced the name *Hydaticus* with *Rhynchaenus myriophylli* Gyllenhal, 1813 as type species. This nominal species is listed by Dalla Torre & Hustache (1930) as a junior synonym of *Curculio leucogaster* Marsham, 1802, which is the type species of *Litodactylus* Redtenbacher, 1845. *Hydaticus* Schönherr is a junior homonym of *Hydaticus* Leach, 1817 (Coleoptera, DYTISCIDAE). When Schönherr (1833) established the name *Phytobius* he attributed it to Schmidt and gave his earlier name *Hydaticus* as a synonym; he included only one species, *Rhynchaenus velutus* Beck, 1817, which he gave as the type species of *Phytobius*. *Rhynchaenus velutus* is also the type species of *Eubrychius* Thomson, 1859 by original designation and monotypy. However, it is doubtful whether it was Schönherr's intention to introduce a replacement name for *Hydaticus*, and in terms of the modern Code he did not do so: he attributed *Phytobius* to another person (Schmidt), he did not give a reason for replacing *Hydaticus*, and he designated a different type species.

3. Dejean (1835, p. 282) listed a number of species in *Phytobius*, as did Schönherr (1836, p. 458); they both included *Curculio quadrituberculatus* Fabricius, 1787 (p. 100). In 1859 Thomson (p. 138) designated *C. quadrituberculatus* as the type species of *Phytobius*, which has ever since been used in that sense (e.g. Arnett, 1960–1962; Colonnelli, 1980; Lucht, 1987; a further 12 references by 18 authors in the

last 40 years is held by the Commission Secretariat). Earlier, Schönherr (1825, col. 586) had designated *C. quadrituberculatus* as type species of his new genus *Rhinoncus*, but this usage was not followed, even by Schönherr himself, and in Opinion 1529 *Curculio pericarpus* Linnaeus, 1758 was accepted as the type species of *Rhinoncus*.

4. To maintain the current usage of *Phytobius* as placed on the Official List, and to maintain *C. quadrituberculatus* as the type species, it is necessary to suppress its use as a homonym by Schönherr (1833). This will also conserve the established usage of the names *Litodactylus* Redtenbacher, 1845 and *Eubrychius* Thomson, 1859.

5. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

- (1) to use its plenary powers to suppress the name *Phytobius* Schönherr, 1833 and all uses of that name prior to the publication of *Phytobius* by Dejean, 1835 for the purposes of both the Principle of Priority and the Principle of Homonymy;
- (2) to place on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Generic Names in Zoology the name *Phytobius* Schönherr, 1833, as suppressed in (1) above.

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